



Greensboro Housing Authority
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Office
Chief Executive Officer

January 19, 2018

Chairman Ajit V. Pai
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St. SW
Washington, DC 20554

Re: Bridging the Digital Divide for Low-Income Consumers, WC Docket Nos. 17-287, 11-42, 09-197

Dear Chairman Pai:

The Greensboro Housing Authority (GHA), appreciates the opportunity to contribute comments regarding the FCC Lifeline changes. GHA administers over 2,200 units of Project Based Vouchers and Public Housing, 4,700 of the Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCVP) and serves over 12,000 low and very low-income individuals. At GHA we are strongly committed to bridging the digital divide, as the lag in access and understanding of technology exacerbates problems of poverty even further. We have a long history of providing services to our residents that center around digital inclusion and constantly seek to find ways to improve opportunities for advancement.

GHA recently became a part of the ConnectHome Nation network, which seeks to bring low-cost, high-speed Internet access to affordable housing residents across the country. Prior to this distinction, GHA made many strides toward digital inclusion by providing digital literacy trainings for children and senior adults, neighborhood computer labs and wireless access in common areas and community rooms. Our goal through being a part of ConnectHome is to provide our residents with access to broadband high-speed Internet in the home, increase computer literacy and provide discounted equipment.

This is a mission of GHA's because the digital divide is widening as technology moves faster and low-income individuals are further left out of participating in modern society. It is imperative that we address the inequality and do all we can to make these services available to low-income individuals. Programs such as FCC's Lifeline should continue for these purposes and GHA would like to address points in the proposed changes.

GHA opposes elimination of the equipment requirement, discussed in paragraph 76. For maximum accessibility for all members of a household, devices must be Wi-Fi-enabled and hotspot capable. Without Wi-Fi, an individual is limited to just one part of their home or one specific piece of

equipment. Tablets, laptops, smartphones or other devices would be limited to one area of the residence or incapable of accessing the broadband at all without wireless-enabled routers. Many of our residents use these devices for job applications, online classes or a child might use for homework or educational enrichment activities. It should not be more difficult for an individual to pursue these opportunities that are directly related to the ability to access the Internet. Having access to the Internet unlocks many of these opportunities. By lessening the standard of equipment, it also is not as helpful for the individuals this program is meant to serve.

GHA additionally opposes benefit limits in paragraphs 117 and 118. Many of the pursuits that access to broadband will aid, such as furthering education or a student's homework or other digital educational activities, are not endeavors that will show an instant gain in income. These are activities that take time to see such benefits. For this reason, GHA opposes placing a benefit limit that restricts the amount of support a household may receive or the length of time a household may participate in the program.

Again, GHA thanks you for the opportunity to provide comments for this very important program that serves low-income individuals. We ask that you please consider our comments to move this program forward as digital skills and access are more important than ever before. Without more being done to make digital access easier, the gaps will continue to widen and will push our national economy in the wrong direction.

Sincerely,



Tina Akers Brown
Chief Executive Officer